

The Woman's Column.

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The Woman's Column.

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ELIZABETH CADY STANTON.

In the death of Mrs. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the cause of equal rights has lost one of its earliest and most prominent pioneers, and the world one of its most fearless and picturesque personalities.

Elizabeth Cady was born Nov. 12, 1815, at Johnstown, N. Y. She was the daughter of Judge Daniel Cady, a learned jurist, and Margaret Livingston, a young woman of unusual spirit and vivacity.

Little Elizabeth became an advocate of equal rights while still a child. In a letter written long after, she said:

"In my earliest girlhood I spent much time in my father's office. There I heard many sad complaints made by women against the injustice of the laws. We lived in a Scotch neighborhood, where many of the men still retained the old feudal ideas of women and property. Thus, at a man's death, he might will his property to his eldest son; and it was not unusual for the mother—who had perhaps brought all the property into the family—to be made an unhappy dependant on the bounty of a dissipated son. The tears and complaints of these women, who came to my father for legal advice, touched my heart, and I would often childishly appeal to my father for some prompt remedy. On one occasion he took down a law-book and tried to show me that something called 'the laws' prevented him from putting a stop to these cruel and unjust things. In this way my heart was filled with a great anger against those laws. Whereupon the students in the office, to amuse themselves by exciting my feelings, would always tell me of any unjust laws which they found during their studies. My mind was so aroused against the barbarism of the laws thus pointed out, that I one day marked them with a pencil, and decided to take a pair of scissors and cut them out of the book—supposing that my father and his library were the beginning and end of the law! I thought that if I could only destroy those laws the poor women would have no further trouble. But when the students informed my father of my proposed mutilation of his volumes, he explained to me that bad laws were to be abolished in quite a different way."

When Elizabeth was about ten years old, her only brother died; and her heart

was wrung by her father's grief. She saw that his plans for the future were more affected by the loss of this one son than they would have been by the loss of all his five daughters. Little Elizabeth climbed into her father's lap as he sat by the coffin, and he put his arm around her and said with a deep sigh, "O my daughter, I wish you were a boy!" She answered, "Then I will be a boy. I will do all that my brother did."

She wrote later: "I thought the chief thing was to be learned and courageous, as I fancied all boys were. So I decided to learn Greek, and to manage a horse." She persuaded their pastor, Dr. Hosack, to teach her Greek. "I taxed every power, in the hope some day to hear my father say, 'Well, a girl is as good as a boy, after all.' But he never said it. When the doctor would come to spend the evening with us, I would whisper in his ear, 'Tell my father how fast I get on.' And he would tell him, and praise me, too. But my father would only pace the room and sigh, 'Ah, she should have been

a boy!" At length I entered the academy, and, in a class mainly of boys, studied mathematics, Latin, and Greek. As two prizes were offered in Greek, I strove for one and got it. 'Now,' said I, 'my father will be satisfied.' I hastened home, rushed into his office, and laid the new Greek Testament, my prize, on his lap. He took the book, looked through it, asked me some questions, appeared to be pleased, handed the book back to me, and when I was aching to hear him say something which would show that he recognized the equality of the daughter with the son, he kissed me on the forehead and exclaimed, with a sigh, 'Ah, you should have been a boy!'"

On graduating in her fifteenth year from the Johnstown Academy, Elizabeth expected to go to Union College, where her brother had been a student. To her disappointment and disgust, she learned that it did not admit girls. Instead, she was sent to Mrs. Willard's famous female seminary at Troy. "If there is any one thing on earth," wrote Mrs. Stanton, twenty



years later, "from which I pray God to save my daughters, it is a girls' seminary. The two years which I spent in a girls' seminary were the dreariest years of my whole life."

During the next seven years, which she passed at home, her mother insisted on her being taught music, water-colors, and embroidery, but her father encouraged her to read his law books, and she found a great fascination in them.

While visiting her cousin, Gerrit Smith, she became warmly interested in the anti-slavery movement, and it was at his house that she first met Henry B. Stanton, whom she afterwards married. Mr. Stanton was a lawyer and journalist, an abolitionist, and a remarkably eloquent speaker at anti-slavery meetings. They were married in 1840, and on their wedding tour they attended the World's Anti-Slavery Convention in London, to which her husband was a delegate. This was the famous convention from which the women delegates were shut out. William Lloyd Garrison, though he had crossed the ocean to attend the meeting, was so indignant at this injustice that he refused to take his own seat as a delegate, and instead sat in the gallery with the excluded women. Mr. Stanton was a delegate from that branch of the anti-slavery society in America which was opposed to the public participation of women, but the young bride's sympathies were of course wholly on the other side. Lucretia Mott was one of the rejected women delegates, and it was at this convention that she and Mrs. Stanton first met, and laid the foundation of their life-long friendship. They visited the British Museum together, and sat down at the entrance to rest a few minutes. They began to talk about "women's rights," and became so absorbed that before they knew it three hours had passed away, and they left without going any further into the Museum. To a friend who asked what most interested her in all London, Mrs. Stanton answered, "Lucretia Mott." She made up her mind then to devote herself to the improvement of women's condition, so far as was compatible with her own family cares.

During the next few years, at her home in Seneca Falls, N. Y., she was absorbed in the many duties of a young mother and housekeeper. She had seven children, five sons and two daughters, exceptionally beautiful and healthy children, and she was at the head of a large and hospitable home. But the question of equal rights for women never ceased to occupy her thoughts. In 1848, with Lucretia Mott and a few other like-minded women and men, she held in Seneca Falls the first woman's rights convention the world had ever known. Before this time, gifted women had written and spoken as individuals in behalf of equal rights for their sex, but this was the first concerted movement to that end.

The call read: "The object of the convention is to discuss the social, civil and religious condition and rights of women." No mention was made of political rights. But Mrs. Stanton was determined that a resolution in favor of woman suffrage should be offered. Mrs. Mott said, "Lizzie, thee will make the convention ridiculous." Mr. Stanton, who had drawn up

for presentation at the meeting a series of extracts from the laws bearing unjustly on women's property rights, was thunderstruck when his wife showed him, confidentially, her proposed resolution asking for the ballot. He said, "You will turn the proceedings into a farce. I wash my hands of the whole business; I shall not enter the chapel during the session." Mrs. Stanton could find no one who would agree in advance to speak for her resolution except Frederick Douglass; but she persisted in offering it, and, after two days' discussion, it was adopted unanimously, with the rest of the resolutions.

Miss Anthony, strange as it may seem, was at this time inclined to ridicule woman suffrage; but she soon became a convert. Three years after the Seneca Falls convention she and Mrs. Stanton met, and formed the close friendship which has lasted all their lives. In many respects they were complements of each other; Mrs. Stanton's literary ability and Miss Anthony's great executive power, being brought together in harmonious double harness, made "a strong team." Mrs. Stanton wrote eloquent lectures and pronouncements, and Miss Anthony delivered them or sent them out in printed form. Mrs. Ida H. Harper says in her "Life and Work of Susan B. Anthony:"

"Mrs. Stanton had a large house and a constantly increasing family, making it exceedingly difficult to find time for literary work; so when a state paper was to be written, Miss Anthony would go to Seneca Falls. After the children were in bed, the two women would sit up far into the night, arranging material and planning their work. The next day Mrs. Stanton would seek the quietest spot in the house and begin writing, while Miss Anthony would give the children their breakfast, start the older ones to school, make the dessert for dinner, and trundle the babies up and down the walk, rushing in occasionally to help the writer out of a vortex."

Mrs. Stanton, in her reminiscences, after describing the distracting pranks of her many boisterous and healthy boys, says:

"It was amid such exhilarating scenes that Miss Anthony and I wrote addresses for temperance, anti-slavery, educational, and woman's rights conventions. Here we forged resolutions, protests, appeals, petitions, agricultural reports and constitutional arguments, for we made it a matter of conscience to accept every invitation to speak on every question, in order to maintain woman's right to do so. It is often said by those who know Miss Anthony best, that she has been my good angel, always pushing and guiding me to work. With the cares of a large family, perhaps I might in time, like too many women, have become wholly absorbed in a narrow selfishness, had not my friend been continually exploring new fields for missionary labors. Her description of a body of men on any platform, complacently deciding questions in which women had an equal interest without an equal voice, readily roused me to a determination to throw a fire-brand into the midst of their assembly. Thus, whenever I saw that stately Quaker girl coming across my lawn, I knew that some happy convoca-

tion of the sons of Adam was to be set by the ears with our appeals or resolutions.

... We never met without issuing a pronouncement on some question."

It is impossible, within the limits of a sketch of this kind, to give even an outline of the vast amount of reform work that Mrs. Stanton did during her long life. Only a few of the most salient points can be given.

In 1866, having moved to New York City, she offered herself to the electors of its eighth Congressional district as a candidate for Congress, nominating herself, as is the custom in England. She wished to emphasize the fact that the constitution of New York, though it denied women the right to vote, did not deny them the right to be voted for. In the card announcing her candidacy, she said:

Belonging to a disfranchised class, I have no political antecedents to recommend me to your support; but my creed is free speech, free press, free men, and free trade—the cardinal points of democracy.

She received just two dozen votes, out of nearly 23,000.

In 1868 she joined with Miss Anthony, Parker Pillsbury and others in founding and editing *The Revolution*. When the paper after a few years was merged in *The Liberal Christian*, a Unitarian weekly edited by the Rev. Dr. Henry W. Bellows, Mrs. Stanton wittily remarked that "it had found Christian burial in consecrated ground."

For many years she did a great deal of lecturing before lyceums; she addressed State Legislatures and Congressional Committees, and woman's rights conventions without end. Old men who remember her early speeches say that she had a warm, rich and glowing eloquence unlike that of any other suffrage speaker. But her great power was with her pen. Her style had a breadth and majesty unequalled, I think, by any other writer on our question.

Mrs. Stanton was largely instrumental in getting the property rights of married women amended in New York, and made a powerful legislative address in advocacy of that reform. She was president for years of the National W. S. A., and an honorary president of the National American W. S. A. at the time of her death. With Miss Anthony and Mrs. Gage, she compiled the first three volumes of the "History of Woman Suffrage." She is the author of a breezy volume of reminiscences, entitled "Eighty Years and More;" of the much-discussed "Woman's Bible," and of innumerable essays and magazine articles.

She lived for many years at Tenafly, N. J., and a friend has drawn a pleasant picture of her, with her plump figure, rosy cheeks and bright blue eyes, "sporting with her full-grown children under her ancient chestnut and cedar trees."

Mrs. Stanton's views on social and religious questions were heterodox in the extreme, and she preached them in season and out of season, with wit, vigor, and good humor. She had in her a spice of mischief which made her really enjoy flinging some ultra-radical resolution, like a bomb, into a quiet and decorous woman suffrage convention; and she took as

much pleasure in the resulting commotion as a small boy does when he has thrown a stone into a pool. But even those of us who were most tried by the practical difficulties this brought upon us, could not help admiring her fearlessness, persistency, and energy even at her great age; and the merry indifference with which she met the storms of criticism that some of her utterances aroused. Some of her heterodoxies will not seem nearly so shocking fifty years hence as they do now. Others will probably never command acceptance.

Mrs. Stanton in her youth was so pretty that she looked well even in the Bloomer costume, which she and Lucy Stone and Miss Anthony all wore for a few years. To the last, her fine presence and beautiful white curls gave her a striking and picturesque aspect. She was a loving mother, an admirable and accomplished housekeeper.

Mrs. Stanton's 80th birthday was celebrated by the National Council of Women of the United States with a gathering of 3,000 women at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City. Delegates were present from most of the leading women's organizations in the United States, and letters and telegrams were received from almost all over the world. Those from abroad included greetings from Lady Henry Somerset, Lord and Lady Aberdeen, and thirty members of John Bright's family.

Mrs. Stanton has made her home of late years with her widowed daughter, Mrs. Lawrence, in New York City. Though almost blind, she was as alert in mind as ever. During most of her life she had remarkable health and vigor, which she attributed in part to her refusal to worry. "The ills of life," she said, "are sufficiently hard to bear, without adding to them the wear and tear of discontent and rebellion."

Among the many reforms in which she was interested were coöperation, labor reform and an eight-hour day, and international peace and arbitration.

She died of heart failure due to old age, without long illness or severe suffering. Her six surviving children were all with her at the last—Henry, Gerrit Smith, Theodore and Robert, Mrs. Margaret Stanton Lawrence and Mrs. Harriet Stanton Blatch.

The funeral took place Oct. 29 at Mrs. Stanton's home. There were present only the family and a few intimate friends who had been invited, including Susan B. Anthony, Lillie Devereux Blake and Mrs. Charlotte B. Wilbour, who represented Sorosis. Addresses were given by Rev. Martin D. Conroy of the South Place Chapel, London, and by Rev. Antoinette Brown Blackwell. The interment was at Woodlawn Cemetery, where the ceremonies included an address by Rev. Phoebe Hanaford.

A. S. B.

Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt was given a reception during her recent visit to Denver by Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Cornwall, on the roof garden of the Cornwall flats. About 250 guests were present, and at the close of Mrs. Catt's address more than fifty new members joined the Suffrage

Association. A song was sung, written by Dr. Mary Elizabeth Bates and entitled "Women in Politics." A dinner was also given in Mrs. Catt's honor by Mrs. Frank Hall.

INTERNATIONAL REPORTS.

The printed minutes and reports of the International Woman Suffrage Conference are now ready for distribution. It has been decided by the International Committee that no copies shall be given away in the United States. About 250 will be sent free to foreign correspondents who aided in preparing the reports. It is hoped that a sufficient number of copies may be sold in the United States to pay for printing the whole edition. Many of these reports have been translated into English since the Conference, and are printed now for the first time. Suffrage Clubs are especially urged to purchase. Many of the reports of foreign countries contain curious and interesting facts, and will form entertaining numbers as readings upon the club program. All suffragists who wish to keep well informed concerning the woman question should possess themselves of these reports. The information presented is exceedingly valuable, and decidedly broadening in its influence.

The price is 50 cents, postage paid. The books are well worth the money, as they represent the first effort to secure a comparative status of women throughout the world. CARRIE CHAPMAN CATT, Sec'y International Committee, 2008 American Tract Society Building, New York.

WOMEN OF COLORADO.

Mrs. Helen Marsh Nixon, in an article in the *Era Magazine* on "Equal Suffrage in Colorado," says in conclusion:

"It is just beginning to dawn on the political managers that there is a woman vote in this country with which they must reckon. In former years they devoted their energies to capturing the different foreign votes; now they must look after a new element in American politics—the woman vote.

"To sum up the net results of suffrage in Colorado, it may be said that the pessimist has failed in his prediction, for the ballot in the hands of woman has neither unsexed her nor degenerated the world. As for the woman who neglects her home for political work, would she be less likely to do so were politics eliminated? Let us not take the extremes nor the isolated cases to base an opinion upon, but rather take the large class of women who have awakened—through their civic rights—to a greater practical interest in the problems of social life, and who are learning that patriotism includes the small things of life, as well as its tragedies, and that it not only expresses itself, but acts as well. 'But patriotism is not politics,' a lady from Ohio, on a brief visit to Colorado, said. It is just that, and the women of the State, having taken it so, have worked to make political methods better and candidates cleaner.

"The women of Colorado are voting at every election; they are not confounding liberty with license; they are doing their

duty from the standpoint, not of 'the eternal feminine,' but of citizens. The man who gets a safe distance from Colorado and proclaims from the housetops that 'woman suffrage is a failure,' is probably the man who will not allow his wife to vote, and who forgets to register before an important election.

"An impartial examination will prove that suffrage has accomplished good in Colorado through the quickening of the civic conscience among women, which means a distinct progress toward higher civic life."

THE NEW SUFFRAGE STAMP.

In accordance with the plan of work adopted at the last National Woman Suffrage Convention, a suffrage stamp has been issued, representative of our cause and its growth.

The issuing of the suffrage stamp was made at the suggestion of the French Woman Suffrage Association, which recommended its use as a valuable educational medium for the presentation of our cause to all classes of society. The French National stamp represents a woman holding a tablet upon which is inscribed "The Rights of Man." The French suffrage stamp wittily and successfully duplicates this by a man holding a tablet upon which is inscribed "The Rights of Woman."

In the stamp adopted by our Association, the college woman, as the type of the new woman, holds a tablet upon which is inscribed: "In Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Idaho, women vote on equal terms with men." It is hoped, by diffusing more generally the knowledge that in four States of the Union women have equal rights with men, to educate the public to the fact that none of the dire prophecies of our opponents have been realized, but that, on the contrary, this recognition of woman's individuality, with its accompanying responsibilities, has raised the standard of womanhood, and made women a direct influence and power in the improvement of practical politics.

All suffrage sympathizers are urged, therefore, to use in their personal correspondence this little stamp, and thereby to enlarge its field for propaganda purposes. The stamps can be secured from the National Headquarters, 2008 American Tract Society Building, New York City, price, 25 stamps for 20 cents, 50 stamps for 30 cents, 100 stamps for 50 cents.

KATE M. GORDON,
Cor. Sec. N. A. W. S. A.

The Fortnightly of the Massachusetts W. S. A. was held at 3 Park St., on Oct. 28. Memorial resolutions for Mrs. Stanton were adopted, also the following:

Resolved, That we rejoice in the endorsement of the tax-payers' suffrage bill in Illinois by the State Federation of Women's Clubs, with its 35,000 members, and by the Chicago Teachers' Federation, with its 4,000 teachers, as a sign of women's growing realization of their need of the ballot.

Mrs. W. Pollard Byles opened the meeting with a brief address on "The Woman Question in England." Mrs. Huntington Smith then gave an interesting address on the work of the Animal Rescue League.

SEXUAL TABOO IN EDUCATION.

The University of Chicago has become a target for shafts of well-deserved ridicule by its un-American action in deciding to "segregate" the girls during the first two years of the course. F. G. Buckstaff writes in the *Chicago Unity*:

It is gratifying to find, in recent works on anthropology, that even in primitive days there were vestiges of that admirable discretion in regard to separating the sexes which has lately characterized the officers of several American institutions of learning.

Have university faculties been devoting especial attention to the customs of Fijian, Malay and Australian tribes? If not, their attention should be called to Ernest Crowley's study of primitive marriage. He dwells especially (The Mystic Rose, Macmillan) on the great social custom of "taboo," by which contact with all sources of possible danger is forbidden. Sexual taboo is an important extension of this principle. Among most of the tribes which we have hitherto been in the habit of calling uncivilized, contact with a woman is considered dangerous, rendering men weak, effeminate and cowardly. The Tahitians forbade men and women to eat together; they had an aversion to holding any intercourse with each other at their meals, and they were so rigid in the observance of this custom that even brothers and sisters had their separate baskets of provisions, and generally sat some yards apart when they ate, with their backs to each other, without exchanging a word. In sickness or pain, or whatever circumstances the mother, the wife, the sister, or the daughter might be brought into, *tabu* was never released. The men were considered *ra* or sacred—(Rah! Rah! At last we see some meaning in a college yell. "Ra Harvard," means, of course, Harvard is sacred to men, or Harvard men are sacred)—while the female sex was considered *noa*, or common.

In Victoria males and females have separate fires, at which they cook their own food. Many of the best kinds of food are forbidden to women. Boys are not allowed to eat any female quadruped. If they are caught eating a female opossum, for instance, they are severely punished. The reason given is that such food makes them peevish and discontented. Among other tribes boys are forbidden to eat with women "lest they grow ugly or become gray." In Eastern Central Africa each village has a separate mess for males and females. So in very many tribes in Africa, India, Siam, Corea, North America—husband and wife may not eat together.

In the Banks Islands all the adult males belong to the men's club, *Suque*, where they take their meals, while the women and children eat at home.

In Malekula men and women cook their meals separately, and even at separate fires, and all female animals, sows and even hens and eggs, are forbidden.

In Nukahiva, if a woman happens to sit upon or even pass near an object which has become *tabu* by contact with a man,

it can never be used again, and she is put to death. Let us pray that men's colleges will not go so far as the Nukahivans! It is degrading to a Milanese chief to go where women may be above his head. Is, perhaps, a Milanese chief now desiring to enter Chicago University, if only the possibility of women being above him can be removed? Probably he will endow the college with untold millions after segregation is benevolently accomplished.

Among the Indians of California a man never enters his wife's wigwam except under cover of the darkness; and the men's clubhouse may never be entered by women.

Among the Lamoyedo and Ostyaks a wife may not tread in any part of the tent except her own corner; after pitching the tent, she must fumigate it before the men enter.

In New Guinea the women sleep in houses apart, near those of their male relatives. The men assemble for conversation and meals, not for cards and billiards, in the *marea*, a large reception house, which women may not enter.

But here is the prototype of a proposed great university: "In the Sandwich Islands there were six houses connected with every great establishment, one for worship, one for the men to eat in, another for the women, a dormitory, a house for kapa-beating, and one where at certain intervals the women might live in seclusion."

Chicago ought to adopt the curfew law of Seoul, the capital of Corea. "A large bell is tolled at about 8 P. M. and 3 A. M. daily, and between those hours only are women supposed to appear in the streets."

Beware of tiger's flesh. "The Miris will not allow their women to eat tiger's flesh, lest it should make them too strong-minded."

The Pomo Indians of California find it very difficult to maintain authority over their women. A husband often terrifies his wife into submission by impersonating an ogre. After this she is usually tractable for some days. Amongst the Tatu Indians the men have a secret society which gives periodical dramatic performances, with the object of keeping the women in order. The chief actor, disguised as a devil, charges about among the assembled squaws. "In Africa (America?) the numerous attempts of the men to keep the women down have been noted."

Women, in their turn, form similar associations amongst themselves, in which they discuss their wrongs and form plans of revenge. In this we may see the origin of women's clubs. Mpongive women have an institution of this kind, which is really feared by the men.

I propose to the president of the National Federation of Women's Clubs that she bring a Mpongive club over to help us fight child labor. But perhaps the color line would prevent. What color are Mpongive women, anyhow?

In Fiji women are kept away from all worship; dogs are excluded from some temples, women from all.

An excellent suggestion for discipline at the remodeled university is furnished by the Thooais. When a man is unable to do his work, whether through laziness, cowardice, or bodily incapacity, he is

dressed in women's clothes and has to associate and work with the women.

It is evident from the perusal of these random instances that the Chicago faculty has been studying anthropology. I hope it was in the kindly spirit of the Maori men that their late action was taken. You know Maori men may not eat with their wives, nor may male children eat with their mothers, "lest their *tapu*, or sanctity, should kill them." I am sure no woman of us all would wish to be killed by the sanctity of our males, and in truth I think not many of us are afraid of such a fate. A more common disaster is that feared in Newmark, when, if a girl is baptized in water used for a boy, she will have a moustache.

In the United States "taboo" is still found. It is as much as a man's life is worth to attend women's tea parties, receptions, or clubs, and society would look askance at any woman ever entering the club rooms of such totem-divisions as the Elks.

Among the wise sayings which have become folk-lore is one, "Man's love is of man's life a thing apart; 'tis woman's whole existence." To be sure, this circumscribed existence is the cause of such a situation as that of Marna in "The Confessions of a Wife," whose sufferings find an echo in every woman's heart, and there have been those in modern society who have believed that broader interests, such as men have in government, education, reform, history, and economics, would not only bless, but even civilize the female sex, and turn their minds away from the barbaric splendors with which they now for the most part fight introspective devils.

But a glance at the history of the race shows us that sexual "taboo" has existed from the very earliest times, and that so long as physical prowess is the dominant ambition of educational institutions, the "taboo" can never be broken.

PROGRESS OF WOMEN'S CLUBS.

It is a noteworthy fact that the Illinois State Federation of Women's Clubs at its recent meeting endorsed with enthusiasm the bill to give tax-paying women a vote on all tax questions and for all tax officials. A committee of influential club women will work for the passage of the bill. We believe this is the first time that a State Federation of Women's Clubs, as a body, has taken up the effort to secure any form of suffrage beyond the school ballot. But in Massachusetts and Wisconsin, the State Federations are exerting themselves to get out a large school vote of women; and even the timid clubs which begin by adopting a rule that neither religion nor suffrage shall be mentioned in their assemblies, have entered on the path to the ballot-box.

"The eaglet that with trembling learned
To tempt the yawning deep,
Ere long, if dreaming of the sun,
Will soar in his sleep!"

—*Woman's Journal*.

MISS BELLE KEARNEY of Mississippi made a brilliant address to a delighted audience in Boston last Monday.